



Because marketing your business is more than a 24-hour job

HOME

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ORIGIN OF "25-8 MARKETING"



CHEVY  WE'LL BE THERE

Network marketing: The greatest misconception

Posted on [April 10, 2008](#) | [2 Comments](#)

home exercise equipment

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INTERACTION WITH THE BLOGSTERS

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Network marketing (joining chambers, BNI, associations) is a terrific way to build a business. In 2007, networking was responsible for over 50% of my new business. I hear this echoed by dozens of business owners who join a business networking group.

On the other side of the aisle, though, are dozens of business people who join business networking groups, and then when their

membership renewal is due, they fail to renew. The MAIN reason they give: It didn't get me any business.

How do great networkers differ from poor networkers?

What's the secret to great networking? How come some businesses thrive on networking, while others fail? *One of the great misconceptions of networking is that by joining a roster, you're guaranteed business. A roster spot does not mean a thing.* Just because you're listed on a Chamber of Commerce roster, BNI roster, or Builders Association roster, you can't expect business. Sure, you're a member...on paper. But it ends there. *You're only going to get back what you put in.* I'll present to you a great analogy.

Home exercise equipment is a lot like networking

I was talking on the phone to Janet Kruger from [Lights On](#) in Mankato, Minnesota about commonalities in Builders Associations. A local builders association has many members — some are active, and some are not. What Kruger said, made a lot of sense to me. "Home exercise equipment is a lot like networking," Kruger explained. "You can't buy a piece of exercise equipment, and expect it to work if you don't use it. If you exercise daily, it will work. If you don't, it becomes little more than a clothes hanger." Kruger was Associate of the Year in the Minnesota River Builders Association.

Three ways to maximize your networks

Here are three specific ways to get the most out of any network you belong to:

1. **Join a committee.** Get involved. Meet other members by working together. Show them your talents. Let your work be your testimonial. Become part of the leadership of the organization. It starts with involvement.
2. **Attend the meetings.** Whether is business-after-hours or membership meetings, use every chance you get to meet people face-to-face. Business comes where it's invited.
3. **Ask for appointments** using this phrase: *When could we meet to discuss ways to help each other grow our businesses?* What smart business owner is going to say no?

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Don't let your marketing become 'Tyranny of the Urgent'

Posted on [April 9, 2008](#) | [2 Comments](#)



Are you balancing the important marketing with the urgent marketing?

I was talking to a business owner this afternoon, when she used the phrase “tyranny of the urgent.” It got me thinking about how business is run, sales are made, and marketing is planned and executed.

In Charles Hummel’s 1967 essay *Tyranny of the Urgent*, one important point Hummel makes is **striking a balance between what is considered urgent, and what is considered important**. This issue is really all about time management. As a cotton mill manager once told Hummel “Your greatest danger is

letting the urgent things crowd out the important.”

What are examples of urgent marketing?

Business owners are under pressure to increase sales, make payroll, handle employees, and many other things. Under this pressure, marketing that I would consider urgent is any type of marketing that is reactionary. When a competitor runs a coupon, you run a coupon. When a car dealer runs a giant inventory reduction sale (which by the way is cliché...because what sale isn't meant to reduce inventory?) ...they are trying to make a month-end sales quota. This is urgent (and reactionary) marketing. Selling price before value...another example of urgent marketing. It's looking for the quick-fix, the quick buck, the easy sale.

What are examples of important marketing?

Important marketing is, at times, going back to the basics. It is creating, and maintaining, your customer list. It is making sure you have your graphics, logo, and pictures organized on a disk for easy access when marketing materials are needed. It is building a marketing plan, so that you can be proactive, rather than reactive. It also keeps you on budget. Important marketing is building a website rich with content, and search-engine optimized, so that you can start the marketing process to your customers *before* they become your customers.

6 things you can do to shift marketing priorities from urgent to important

- Write a [marketing plan](#).
- [Organize your business logos](#) and pictures into one easy-to-find place.
- Get your [database of customers](#) updated
- Do a website evaluation...is your website doing what you need it to do?
- Consider getting professional marketing services. The small business owner can't do it all themselves. Consultants of any kind bring valuable outside opinions and experience to the table.
- Begin each week with a list of the most important things that will grow your business. Create another list of the tasks for the week. Schedule time with yourself to work on *the first list*.

One of my favorite phrases is: Business is a series of

interruptions...interrupted by more interruptions.

Let's *all* try to get out of the interruption trap. Ever go through a day and know you worked hard, but thinking back, can't remember what you accomplished? Yeah, it happens to me too. Remember, it's not about time. We all have the same amount of time...24-hours per day, 7 days per week. It is about the priorities.

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Business blogging: It's a marathon, not a 100M dash

Posted on [April 8, 2008](#) | [4 Comments](#)



I had an opportunity Tuesday evening to meet a group of Twin Cities bloggers at a [Biz Bloggers Meetup](#), organized by blogger [Caroline Melberg](#). It was chance to meet other bloggers from around the Twin Cities. Some were newbies, some relatively new to blogging, and some very experienced. The purpose – to share ideas and topics about blogging. 15 heads are better than one...an exchange of blogging ideas is always great.

Here are a couple of things I learned from my fellow bloggers between bites of my pizza

One discussion I had with blogger [Aaron Weiche](#) from Five Technology was about what Weiche called the “tipping point” in any blog. This tipping point is the moment when a blog “catches hold” of Google search engines, gains a respectable amount of subscribers, and starts to get the attention of the relevant blogging community. When this happens, your blog can become a marketing tactic in your marketing plan.

I liken blogging to a race

However, I’d call this race a marathon, and not a 100M dash. In other words, if you’re looking for a quick fix or silver bullet to boost your website traffic, *blogging isn’t the ticket*. Why? Because business blogging takes time to reach that aforementioned tipping point ...including lots and lots of content focussed on your topic. Time must be invested in your blog, if you’re going to make it a serious marketing tool for your business. That’s just the way it is.

Relevance is one of the keys

Another thing that I learned, according to Melberg, is that your business blog must always be relevant to the audience you’re writing for. This is important. Keyword relevance helps a blog get that Google Juice we’re all seeking. Blog topics must stay focussed. Melberg should know...she consults about blogging to quite a number of clients.

I enjoyed the meeting. If you’re in the Twin Cities area, are blogging, or even just thinking about it, join the group and see what it’s all about. The [next meeting](#) is scheduled for Monday, April 28th in Plymouth.

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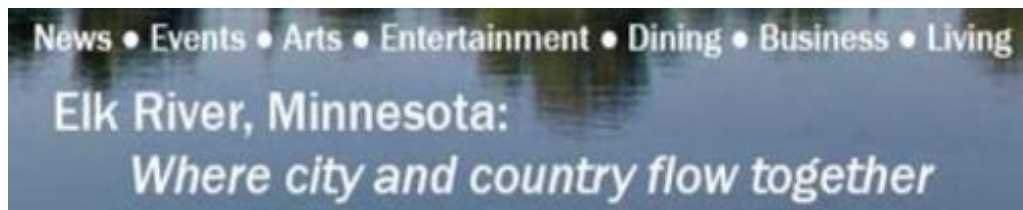
Co-blogging: You don't have to go it alone

Posted on [April 7, 2008](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

If you want to start blogging about a topic or area, find like-minded bloggers and create a co-blog.

Co-blogging has several advantages. The blogging is spread out, so one blogger isn't writing all the content. WordPress makes it very easy to let each co-blogger contribute, and there is an administrative function that allows overall editing. And co-blogging gives different views on a related topic.

If you can find non-competing co-bloggers to write about a topic or area of interest, co-blogging is a nice way to start your blogging experience. And a very good way to market your business.



Our Elk River Minnesota Co-blog

Want to see an example of a co-blog? 25-8 Marketing Inc. recently launched a local Elk River, Minnesota **Co-blog** entitled [Elk River Minnesota Blog](#). In cooperation with Chuck Carstensen, a local Realtor with [The Discovery Team](#) at RE/MAX, we invite internet surfers to read about community news, events, music, art, local sports, entertainment, living in Elk River, and other cool things about zip code 55330.

Community co-bloggers are invited to participate by submitting one blog per week of local interest to [Elk River Minnesota Blog](#). Thus far, we've gotten Michael Yoakum, owner of Great River Remodeling, and Matt Pagh, agent for Integrity Insurance and Financial Services, to jump into the world of co-blogging with us. And the invitation is open ...our hope is to get about ten co-bloggers to contribute with interesting information about our hometown.

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Marketing Proverb: The best time to plant a tree

Posted on [April 5, 2008](#) | [2 Comments](#)



The Chinese Proverb about planting trees goes something like this:

The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago. The second best time is today.

This saying applies to so many realms of our lives, our businesses, and our marketing. If you had planted a tree 20 years ago, you'd be

enjoying the shade and fruits of your labor. But what if you didn't plant a tree 20 years ago? Wouldn't the second best time be today?

Plant your marketing seeds today

So many of the clients whom I meet with plan their marketing in a reactionary mode. Need sales...react with marketing. They are so busy working in their business...that they forget to work on their business.

What I try to explain is that by planting marketing seedlings now, you might see fruit (sales) in as little as three months. If you persist in your marketing seedlings, your current-month-mode can work toward a great-year-mode.

What marketing seeds can you plant today?

- The best time to *update and organize your customer list* with email and contact information was 6 months ago. The second best time is today.
- The best time to do a *needs analysis* with a key customer was 3 months ago. The second best time is today.
- The best time to do create a *website or blog* was in 2005. The second best time is today.
- The best time to strengthen your relationship with the *top 20% of your customers* was last year. The second best time is today.
- The best time to write your 2008 *marketing plan* was last October. The second best time is today.
- The best time to *organize* your logo, pictures and business graphics in one spot so you have everything you need to quickly create stunning marketing materials was a year ago. The second best time is today.
- The best time to ask all of the people you did business with last year for *referrals* was last year. The second best time is today.

Do business like you plan to stay in business

Be proactive with your marketing. The sooner you start your marketing with long-term in mind, the sooner the benefits will show

up short term. What are you waiting for?

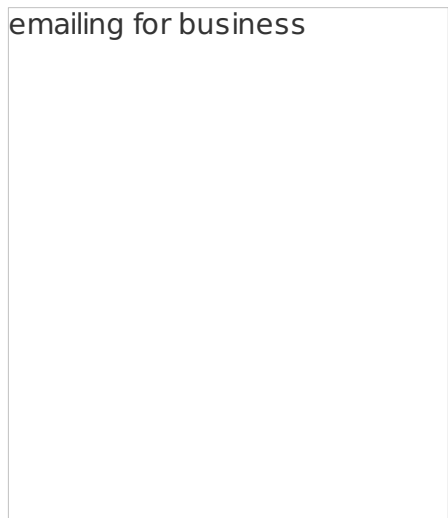
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82.4% plan an increase in e-mail marketing in 2008

Posted on [March 28, 2008](#) | [Leave a comment](#)



I just read my latest copy of **BtoB's Interactive Marketing Guide**.

It's full of great marketing info. In this issue, it sources a [Datran Media survey](#) from a press release, dated January 22nd, 2008:

82.4% of respondents plan to increase their e-mail marketing in 2008.

15.3% of respondents plan the same amount of e-mail marketing in 2008.

2.4% of respondents plan to decrease their e-mail marketing in

2008.

If you market using email, what does this mean?

Over 82% plan to increase their e-mail marketing! There's going to be much more e-mail competition in 2008. *Your e-mails need to stand out or they'll get lost.* This translates to creating a *really good subject line* – something that is not only catchy, but also creates trust and interest to the recipient.

Links need to work. Inside the email, make sure your links are working, even if the images get blocked.

You need a reporting system to track metrics. Every email campaign needs to track opens, bounces, and clicks. I use [Constant Contact](#), (click on the link for a 60-day free trial) for my business and am very happy with it.

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Lessons from The Godfather: I'm going to make him an offer...

Posted on [March 26, 2008](#) | [Leave a comment](#)

The Godfather

For over 35 years, this movie line from *The Godfather* has stood the test of time: "I'm going to make him an offer he can't refuse."

It is one of the greatest movie lines of all time. And it begs another advertising teaching moment – What makes a great marketing offer?

A great marketing offer has four distinct components

1) A offer. As simple as it sounds, there are a lot

of marketing materials or commercials that do not contain an offer. Corporate sometimes calls this “branding.” It’s advertising designed to create name or product awareness. It’s often created by advertising agencies who have huge client budgets, and lacks accountability because it’s difficult to track. *A great marketing offer must ask for a specific, trackable response from the person receiving the marketing message.*

2) Including a specific benefit to the customer. Will it save time? If so, how? And how much time will it save? Compare these two offers: Offer 1: *Our dry cleaning delivery service will save you time.* Offer 2: *Our dry cleaning delivery service saves our customers an average of 52 minutes per week.*

3) A price. Great marketing offers always have a price. A specific dollar amount is *always* better than a percentage. **Always.** In the customer’s eyes, they’d like to exactly what they’ll be paying, or saving. Monetize a great marketing offer.

4) A deadline. A deadline creates a sense of urgency. It also creates a sense of demand. *This offer ends soon* is weak. *This offer ends at midnight on Monday, March 25th* is strong.

Use these four elements to always create great marketing offers for your products and services.

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Peeps is 55 years old: Production of one billion per year

Posted on [March 21, 2008](#) | [2 Comments](#)



This comes under the category of *I wish I had invented it*

Did you know that there are over one billion of the marshmallow Peeps produced each year? Unbelievable. 49.6 million is sales in 2007. What can we learn about marketing from this company? Two things:

1) *Be unique.* There is only one company that makes Peeps...and they've gained market share because they are known for doing something well.

2) *Be consistent.* Peeps customers know exactly what they are getting everytime they open a package of this marshmallow treat.

Peeps facts:

Ingredients: Mostly sugar, corn syrup, and gelatin, same as most other marshmallow candies. They do have trace amounts of flavoring, coloring, wax, unpronounceable preservatives and such.

Calories: About 32 per Peep (and can anyone eat just one?)

Colors: Yellow was the original. Since Peep Season 1998, Peeps are available in yellow, white, pink, violet, and blue. Blue was added for the 1998 season. Violet first appeared in the 1997 season.

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Improve the way you market to women

Posted on [March 20, 2008](#) | [2 Comments](#)



Whether you market to businesses or consumers, improving the way you market to women will have a dramatic impact on your bottom line.

Consumer goods

Women influence nearly 80% of all consumer goods purchases.

According to [Entrepreneur Online](#):

Saving time, offering convenience and providing good service are paramount considerations for most female shoppers. Because three-quarters of women ages 25 to 54 work full or part time while remaining largely responsible for their households, they appreciate businesses that help them save time when shopping and products or services that make life more convenient. Savvy retailers adjust their store hours and locations to meet the needs of their customers.

Automotive

The trend doesn't stop with consumer goods. Women have a huge impact on the automotive industry. [From AOL Online](#):

Women have become increasingly influential when it comes to the automotive world, in everything from car design to advertising campaigns to what happens when you show up at the dealership. So what do women really want when buying a new car? And how are automakers responding to this turning tide?

According to Marketing to Women author [Marti Barletta](#), women seek more advice from an auto authority (57%) before buying a new car; they spend more time in the purchasing process than men (17 weeks versus 15) and women shop at an average of three dealerships for best price and treatment.

Real Estate

[Bernice Ross](#) from Inman News says that single women are today's prime real estate niche:

Women are rapidly becoming the silent majority in the real estate marketplace. While everyone pays attention to the needs of the "typical family," very few people are addressing the specific needs of single female real estate buyers and sellers.

Which of the following groups buys more condominiums: married couples, single men or single women?

The answer is single women. Not only are single women

buying more condominiums, NAR reports that 22 percent of all home purchases are made by single women as opposed to only 9 percent for single males. In other words, single Gen X and Gen Y women are buying more than twice as much real estate as compared to Gen X and Gen Y men.

The bottom line...women wield the influence. Smart marketers know this, and are developing ways to make their marketing women centric.

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Sharpening your Marketing Saw: What can you do?

Posted on [March 19, 2008](#) | [Leave a comment](#)



Stephen Covey talks about this anology in his *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*:

What are you doing? you ask.

'Can't you see?' comes the impatient reply. 'I'm sawing down this tree.'

'You look exhausted!' you exclaim.

'How long have you been at it?'

'Over five hours,' he returns, 'and I'm beat! This is hard work.'

'Well, why don't you take a break for a few minutes and sharpen that saw?' you inquire. 'I'm sure it would go a lot faster.'

'I don't have time to sharpen the saw,' the man says emphatically. 'I'm too busy sawing!'

When it comes to business, we're all busy.

I ask clients who don't blog, or do newsletters, or update their website, or develop a marketing plan...why? The answer is always honest. And it's almost always the same. *They are too busy.* They are too busy working IN their business to work ON their business.

What can you do to sharpen your marketing saw? Here are four thought- starters:

1) Commit to organizing your database. Your database of customers is the single most important thing you have as a business owner. Once you have a contact management system or some sort (computerized, with name, address, phone, email), exportable to an excel spreadsheet, you're set.

Your database is part of the foundation of all the marketing you do. And probably most of the referrals you get.

2) Reading good literature. The average American reads [four books](#) a year. Don't be average. Reading will give you insight and perspective. I am currently re-reading one book: [Permission Marketing](#) (by Seth Godin) and reading another: [The God Questions](#) (by Hal Seed and Dan Grinder).

3) Brainstorm Brown Bag. Set aside a lunch hour (once per month) for a brainstorming session at your office. Everyone brings their own lunch. The challenge is pre-determined...what new ideas can we use, what's working, how are you handling this objection. You get the idea. **Hint:** Rule one of brainstorming...no idea is judged during the session.

4) Seminars and workshops. Most of us do professional

development or continuing education. That's great. But also try something outside the norm of your business life. You can probably relate it back. I recently took a 4-week meditation class from [Kelly LaVine](#) that was outside my "norm" and really enjoyed it.

Abraham Lincoln said this: *Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe.* He was a pretty smart guy.

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